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was not likely to have met the *aveu* in literature, as he admits that he had not read a novel since he left school.

Lastly, Mr. Woodbridge mentions the fact that Mme de La Fayette returns to the subject of the *aveu* in the *Princesse de Tende* (*Comtesse de Tende?*), and that this has been taken as an answer to the critics. There are certain commonplaces of literary history that should be allowed to die of old age, and this is one of them. Mme de La Fayette was intelligent enough to know that a confession by letter of an infidelity that would soon be obvious was much more *vraisemblable* than the oral confession of the *Princesse de Clèves*—so much more that it was no answer to the critics, but a capitulation. She never published the *Comtesse de Tende*, so that it could not be an answer to any one. Personally I have grave doubts as to whether it was written after the *Princesse de Clèves*, as it bears every mark of an earlier and less skilful production, and may be the first rough sketch of the idea of the *aveu*. It did not see the light until 1724, long after Mme de La Fayette's death.

H. ASHTON.

*The University of British Columbia.*

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## FOLK-SONG IN AMERICA—SOME RECENT PUBLICATIONS

The last two years have seen a notable activity in this country in the publication of traditional ballads and songs taken down from the mouths of the folk. Ever since the completion of Child's great work twenty years ago collectors have been busy in various parts of the country, and have found a surprising number of English ballads still alive here in oral tradition, often in better poetical estate than in the old country. Up to the present some seventy<sup>1</sup> of the ballads in Child's corpus have been recorded, besides

*nouvelles françaises ou les Divertissements de la Princesse Aurélie*, Paris, 1656, 2 vols.

<sup>1</sup> See Reed Smith, "The Traditional Ballad in the South," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, XXVII, 55 ff., and "The Traditional Ballad in the South during 1914," *ibid.*, XXVIII, 199 ff. Professor Smith lists 76; Mr. Sharp has since added 3 more. Some of those in Professor Smith's list, however, can hardly be said to have been found in living American tradi-

a large number that are unquestionably traditional but were not admitted to the *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*. This persistence of old world ballads is not limited to any one part of the country; they are found in the New England, Middle Atlantic, North Central, Western, and Southwestern states as well as in the Southern mountains, and in urban as well as in rural populations. But the results of the collectors' work have remained in great part unpublished or have appeared only piecemeal and in journals of limited circulation. For the most part, also, the collectors have not been able to record the tunes;<sup>2</sup> and folk-song with the singing left out stands to living folk-song very much as the dried specimens in an herbarium do to living flowers. It is, therefore, most fortunate that the student of music has entered the field in the publications here under review. The present reviewer, however, has unfortunately no competence in music, and must restrict his account to matters of text.

*Lonesome Tunes* (Ditson, Boston, 1916), by Loraine Wyman and Howard Brockway, contains twenty-five folk-songs taken down in eastern Kentucky in 1916. Six of them are forms of ballads in Child,<sup>3</sup> viz., *Barbara Allen* (84), *The Hangman's Song* (95), *Lord Batesman* (53), *The Mary Golden Tree* (286), *Six Kings' Daughters* (4), and *Sweet William and Lady Margery* (74). Of those not in Child nine may fairly be called ballads: *Jackaro*, *John Riley*, *The Lady and the Glove*, *The Little Mohee*, *The Nightingale*, *Peggy Walker*, *Pretty Polly*, *The Sweetheart in the Army*, and *William Hall*. All these except *The Nightingale* are or have been current as stall ballads in England, tho in some cases the text has suffered considerable change. *Pretty Polly* is a truncated form of *Polly's Love, or The Perjured Ship-Carpenter*; Polly's avenging ghost has been forgotten. *John Riley*, on the other hand, one of the innumerable ballads on the theme of the returned disguised lover, has been better preserved here than in the old country, at least if Pitts's and Catnach's prints fairly represent the English

tion. Let me take this occasion to correct an error in his list, due, I presume, to a slip of my own in reporting to him. Child No. 185 is not in the Missouri collection, and has never, I believe, been found in America.

<sup>2</sup> A notable exception is the work of Mr. Phillips Barry in many articles in the *Journal of American Folk-Lore* since 1905.

<sup>3</sup> Numbers in parenthesis following ballad titles are those of the *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*.

form of the piece. In them, the girl rather lamely abandons the hope of Riley's return and goes off with her new and unknown suitor; in Miss Wyman's copy the story runs true to form, the unknown suitor revealing himself in the last stanza as the long lost Riley. *The Nightingale* is apparently known only in America. Tho its general theme of easy roadside seduction is old, having come down from the French *pastourelles* of the thirteenth century, and tho its method of *double-entendre* is a familiar form of wit in seventeenth-century vulgar balladry, yet this particular development of the theme seems never to have been a part of the stock of British ballad printers; and according to Mr. Sharp it is likewise unknown in living English tradition. It is, however, a great favorite in America—where, it should be noted, it is commonly sung without consciousness of its original meaning. Of the remaining ten, one, *Brother Green*, is homiletic; one, *The Old Maid's Song*, is comic; four, *The Barnyard Song*, *The Bed-time Song* (a version of *Kitty Alone and I*), *Billy Boy*, and *Frog Went A-Courting*, are nursery songs; and four belong to the class which may conveniently be called folk-lyric. Two of them, *Sourwood Mountain* and *The Ground Hog*, are clearly native American products, and a third, *Little Sparrow* (known also as *Say Oh! Beware* and as *Come All Ye Fair and Tender Ladies*), appears as an integral song to be known only in America, tho it is reminiscent thruout of the commonplaces of English folk-lyric; the fourth, *Loving Nancy*, is a version of *The Waggoner's Lad* with one stanza from the English cuckoo-song.

*Folk Songs of the Kentucky Mountains* (Boosey & Co., New York, 1917), by Josephine McGill, contains twenty texts, one of them with two airs, collected in Knott and Letcher Counties in 1914. Thirteen are versions of ballads in Child. The three of these that are also in *Lonesome Tunes* (Nos. 74, 84, 286) differ from the texts there given chiefly by the addition or omission of traditional stanzas. The other ten are *Lord Randal* (12), *Bangum and the Boar* (18), *The Greenwood Side* (20), *John and William* (49), *The Cherry Tree* (54), *Lord Thomas* (73), *Lord Lovel* (75), *Lady Gay* (79), *The Gyspie Laddie* (200), and *The Mermaid* (289). The British traditional balladry outside of the Child corpus is represented by *Babes in the Woods* only. The remaining six are folk-lyrics, viz., *Little Sparrow* and five not given by Miss

Wyman—*As I Walked Out, The Forsaken Girl, The Cuckoo* (which should perhaps rather be called *The Unconstant Lover*, since it is often found without the cuckoo stanza), *Her Cheek Is Like Some Blooming Red Rose*, and *Loving Hannah*.

*English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians* (Putnam, New York, 1917), by Olive Dame Campbell and Cecil J. Sharp, is the most noteworthy publication dealing with folk-song in America that has yet appeared. Mrs. Campbell had been collecting ballads, chiefly in Kentucky and Georgia, for some years. Forty-two texts, three of them without tunes, representing thirty-two different songs and taken down between 1907 and 1914, appear to represent this earlier work of Mrs. Campbell. In the summer of 1916 Mr. Sharp, long recognized as the foremost student of living folk-song in England, joined forces with Mrs. Campbell and in nine weeks, with the help of an expert stenographer, recorded the text and tunes of the remaining two hundred and eighty-four items in the volume. In all there are one hundred and twenty-two songs and three hundred and twenty-three tunes—for in different localities or in the mouths of different singers a song may have four or five, sometimes ten or more, different tunes. The texts also vary widely. The two hundred and eighty-four tunes of Mr. Sharp's collecting were found in a rather small territory in western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee, and at Charlottesville, Virginia. He has collected many more since then, and holds out the prospect of another volume soon. In the Introduction he describes the life and manners of the mountaineers, the peculiarities of their music, the place it holds in their culture, and its relation to the folk-song of the mother country. At the end of the volume are brief but extremely helpful notes listing versions previously printed in the chief British publications, in Child's work, and in the *Journal of American Folk-Lore*.

Mr. Sharp divides the collection into fifty-five 'ballads' and sixty-seven 'songs.' The distinction is, as he acknowledges, more or less arbitrary. It is not apparent, for instance, why *Poor Omie* should be accounted a song rather than a ballad, or why *Awake, Awake* (better known as *The Drowsy Sleeper*) should be accounted a ballad rather than a song. Of the fifty-five, thirty-seven are ballads found in Child's collection (Nos. 3, 4, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 18, 20, 26, 49, 53, 54, 62, 68, 73, 74, 75, 79, 81, 84, 85, 93, 95, 99, 155,

200, 209, 243, 248, 272, 274, 277, 278, 286, 295, 299). That is, in this limited field and in these few weeks Mr. Sharp found more than half the total number of the Child ballads heretofore reported from American tradition, and added three to the list—for *Johnnie Scot* (99), *The Grey Cock* (248), and *The Suffolk Miracle* (272) had not been recorded before. Certain others had been found but seldom, e. g., *Edward* (13) and *The False Knight upon the Road* (3). It should be noted, however, that this last seems to have lived better in the new land than in the old. Child knew it only from Motherwell's recording; in this country it has been found, with interesting variations of form, in Maine, Missouri, and now in Tennessee and North Carolina. Indeed, Mr. Sharp notes that about a third of these ballads—Nos. 3, 11, 13, 18, 49, 62, 68, 81, 99, 248, and 272, including such ballad masterpieces as *Edward*, *Fair Annie*, *The Two Brothers* and *Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard*—have not been recorded in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, and are therefore presumably extinct in English tradition.

Among the ballads found by Mr. Sharp but not admitted to Child's collection some are of unusual interest. In *Seaport Town*, which has been several times recorded in recent years in both England and America, but of which no printed copy has been found, tells in vulgar ballad style the fifth story of the fourth day of the *Decameron*, but without the pot of basil or the buried head. *The Shooting of His Dear* (otherwise known as *Polly Van*) embodies the folk belief that a spirit may return to rescue a loved one from danger. *The Three Butchers*, often printed as a stall ballad in England, is an admirable ballad story effectively told, and one is glad to find it still alive in America. All but one of the eighteen (and that one is but the hack-balladist's variation on a familiar theme) are known in the mother country either in tradition or as stall ballads or in both ways. One wonders whether Mr. Sharp failed to find or preferred not to record such well established American favorites as *The Silver Dagger* and *Fuller and Warren*. Another widely known American ballad, *McAfee's Confession*, is represented by a fragment of three stanzas which Mr. Sharp places among his 'songs' under the title *Harry Gray*.

Of no less interest to the student of folk-poetry than the ballads are these 'songs,' especially those of purely lyric character. They run upon a few themes, most often that of love betrayed, with a

few simple images simply expressed—the mourning dove, the little sparrow that can fly, as the disconsolate girl cannot, and ‘flutter in his breast with tender wings,’ the red, red rose and the weeping willow tree, the ‘ten thousand miles’ of separation, the vow to be faithful until ‘the raging sea shall burn’ and the crow turn white—the poetical commonplaces of folk-lyric. It is in their very simplicity that their poetical power lies, as Burns, who used them freely, well knew. The fact that these images have an emotional potency by themselves and may be arranged and combined in a great variety of ways makes it hard to say whether any given combination of them is a unitary poem or not. I have amused myself by arranging a series of these songs (the texts only, of course, for the tunes have a unity independent of or at least separable from the words they carry) in my possession in such a way that each is evidently and closely connected with its neighbor but the last of the series has no element in common with the first. A like difficulty sometimes presents itself in ballads, but in the lyrics with added force because these have no definite story, as a ballad has, to determine what elements belong together. They are sometimes spoken of as detritus lyrics, as tho they were but chance aggregations of the *disjecta membra* of earlier unitary poems now lost. In some cases they may be so. More often, I think, the lyric image or thought is the germ, the original creation, having an independent life in tradition and attracting to itself from time to time baser matter until it achieves the form of a song of three or four stanzas; then again losing these adventitious elements and floating free in the folk-memory until it shall gather another body. However that may be, and however various the combinations into which these lyric elements may enter, they do sometimes take fairly definite and persistent shape. *Little Sparrow*, included in all three of the publications here considered, and twice recorded in Missouri, has substantially the same text in all the copies. There is a certain degree of coherence, too, about *The Unconstant Lover*. Miss McGill gives it under the title *The Cuckoo*; a London ballad printer, Evans, issued substantially the same text under the same title a hundred years ago; I have a version from Missouri tradition with a different title, but agreeing pretty closely in text with Miss McGill’s. In Mr. Sharp’s volume it has been combined with another song (*The Wagoner’s Lad* A stzs. 2-5), and has lost the

cuckoo stanza. Versions B and D of *The Wagoner's Lad* are akin to Miss Wyman's *Loving Nancy*; and in this the cuckoo stanza reappears. A still feebler integrity appears in the songs that have gathered about the lines:

Oh, who will shoe my little foot,  
And who will glove my hand,  
And who will kiss my red and rosy cheeks  
While you're in a distant land?

*English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians* is especially rich in these popular lyrics. It would be of little use to list them here, since the titles are in most cases useless as a means of identification; the student must go thru the texts and all their variants, and learn the tunes too, if he would trace their relation to texts published elsewhere. Many of them can readily be identified, are identified by the editor, with songs that are or have been current among the folk in the old country; others, made of like material and on the same models, are yet in their present American form unknown in English tradition. Mr. Sharp lists a baker's dozen of them that "are not to be found, so far as I have been able to discover, in any of the standard English collections."<sup>4</sup> A few, like *Sourwood Mountain* and *Harm Link* (better known as *The Young Man Who Wouldn't Hoe His Corn*), appear to have sprung up in this country and to reflect American conditions. Yet even they are properly enough comprized under the title of English folk-song; they are the product of the old stock in a new soil.

Much labor and intelligence have been spent, not unprofitably, upon the study of British balladry in this country. It is now time to turn our critical attention to the more elusive but probably even more fruitful study of the folk-lyric—a study which can be prosecuted successfully only when folk-music, which is an integral not to say the basic element of folk-song, is given its due place. Of such a study these three collections, and especially the last, are at once a means and a promise.

H. M. BELDEN.

*University of Missouri.*

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<sup>4</sup> There is an error in this list, perhaps a misprint. *William and Polly* is clearly the same as *Lisbon*, printed by Mr. Sharp himself in the *Jour. of the Folk Song Society*, II, 22.